T

HE MARIAN FACE OF THE CHURCH

To discover and build a Church with a Marian face, we must start from two assumptions: 1) It is a Church that, with its life and way of thinking, is inspired by Mary’s attitudes. 2) These attitudes are best reflected in the Gospel. With both of these assumptions, it is very easy to find characteristics of a Church with a Marian face. Every Marist needs to feel invited to live them and place them into practice in his life[[1]](#footnote-1).

* It is a Church that *listens and meditates* on the Word of God and is nourished by it. The word of God enriches its spiritual presence in the world and in people’s lives. Listening to God’s Word means entering into God’s world, developing and consolidating the faith that gives meaning to our Christian and Marist life. This is what Mary did[[2]](#footnote-2).
* A *missionary Church* is one that goes to meet men and women of today’s world, as Mary did when she went to visit Elizabeth[[3]](#footnote-3). A Church "that goes out" as Pope Francis usually says. The missionary dimension of the Church is an explicit consequence of meditating and experiencing the Word of God. “Go and preach the Good News” [[4]](#footnote-4). The presence of Mary in the Cenacle turns her into "Queen of Apostles", at the precise moment when the Church began its mission[[5]](#footnote-5).



* It is a *Eucharistic Church*, in the sense that the right and the duty of offering Jesus to the world today, not only through his Word, but also through his Body and Blood, lies in the heart of the Church’s mission. During her visit, Mary assures Elizabeth that her Son is the Son of God, conceived in her womb. Her Body is the Lord’s tabernacle. In this sense, in the words of John Paul II, Mary is the Eucharistic woman par excellence and collaborates in an extraordinary way in the salvation of the world.
* It is a *Church that sings and praises its Lord.*  This was Mary’s attitude when she would sang[[6]](#footnote-6).
* It is a *Church that lives charity,* and it lives it, especially, favouring the most disadvantaged. Echoing the language of the Gospel[[7]](#footnote-7), the poorest are the meek, the hungry. Mary recalls them in her Magnificat.
* It is a *Church that carries life*, in the sense that it offers the world the One who is life[[8]](#footnote-8) and continues giving life at any given time and place. It was Mary’s first task: in Bethlehem, she offers the world, which is symbolized by shepherds and the Magi, He who is life[[9]](#footnote-9).
* It is a *Servant Church* that makes love and service the centre of its mission to reveal to the world the glory of God and to call men and women of all times to a life of faith. This is what Mary teaches us at Cana, where she is attentive to the needs of people who had come for the wedding; and where, above all, transforms the environment where God’s glory and the faith of the disciples is manifested[[10]](#footnote-10) .
* It is a *maternal Church* that welcomes in her womb the children conceived by the Lord. We are all entrusted to Mary, through John. Her spiritual maternity reaches the dimensions of the whole world and it becomes universal. Even in the most dramatic situations of our existence, like suffering or death, the Church, inspired by Mary who remains at the foot of the Cross, is called to transform itself in the maternal face of God for all those who suffer[[11]](#footnote-11).

1. Cf Emili Turú, *Called to build the Marian face of the Church,* Circulating “He gave us the name of Mary”, p.29, Rome 2012. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Luke 2:19; 51 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. Luke 2: 39-45. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Cf. Matt 20,16-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Cf. Acts 1:14 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Cf. Luke 1:46-56. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. Luke 1:52-23.56 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Cf. John 11:25; 14:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Cf. Matt 2:1-12; Luke 2:8. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Cf. John 2: 1-12. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Cf. John 19: 25-27. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)